

News Analysis: Why Shamir Agreed To Accept Baker's Five-Point Proposal

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the religious sphere are met. Should it defect, its five Knesset votes would be available to support a no-confidence motion against the present government and join a narrow government under Labor.

Another religious faction, Degel HaTorah, is considered firmly in Labor's camp, and Likud fears the larger Shas party might jump on the Labor bandwagon if other ultra-Orthodox parties did.

Another possible motive for Shamir's decision was that he and his close associates — Foreign Minister Moshe Arens among others — had concluded that a showdown with Likud's hard-line dissenters is unavoidable.

It is widely admitted in the Shamir-Arens camp that the prime minister made a grave mistake at the July 5 meeting of Likud's Central Committee, when he yielded to hard-line demands that he attach rigid conditions to his initiative for Palestinian elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

They placed constraints on Israel's peace-making ability, weakened Shamir's political clout and strengthened the hands of his chief rivals: Ariel Sharon, David Levy and Yitzhak Moda'i. The three say Shamir's pledges of last July have been "flagrantly breached," and they vow vengeance.

Shamir believes he and the party faithful can face down his detractors in his own good time.

U.S. pressure was another possible factor. According to the pundits, it was becoming increasingly insistent and discomfiting.

Shamir and his aides realized, perhaps belatedly, that Baker and President Bush had taken his elections initiative more seriously than, perhaps, some of Israel's policy-makers themselves did.

At any rate, the U.S. administration invested a good deal of effort and prestige in the proposal, which the Israeli Cabinet endorsed last May 14.

They were therefore irritated that Israel's recalcitrance might bring their efforts to nought.

After might efforts to secure the best possible wording from his viewpoint, Shamir gave in to American pressure. According to this theory, he sensed that Israel's position would not be especially strong in an all-out confrontation with Washington at this time.

Analysts say he probably calculates he can make his stand against the PLO's involvement in the peace process somewhat farther down the road.

Therefore he prefers to go along with Baker now, keeping Israel's guard up against substantive encroachments on its basic positions later, so the speculation goes.

Finally, according to some analysts, the prime minister believes, and even hopes, that the Arab side will balk and bring the whole risky enterprise to a halt.

Some in Likud are convinced that the "assumptions" around which the Inner Cabinet hedged its acceptance of the Baker plan are enough to deter the PLO from giving its tacit assent to a dialogue with Israel and to the proposed elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The flaw in that thinking is that the Palestinians and Egyptians are demanding their own "assurances" from the United States to counterbalance what Washington gives Israel.

Within the realm of what former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger often referred to as "constructive ambiguity," there may yet be room for an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue.

But if that does take place, Israeli observers are unanimous in predicting that a crisis will erupt when the talks open, and it may pervade them for the duration.

Peres hinted as much after a recent Cabinet meeting, when he said the next step now would be the composition of the Palestinian delegation, "which no doubt will cause problems. If it doesn't, I shall be pleasantly surprised," the Labor Party leader remarked.

Meanwhile, Likud's rebel triumvirate — Sharon,

Britain Opposes Mitterran Plan To Convene A Euro-Arab Dialogue

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the occasion to condemn Israel's behavior toward the Palestinians, said the Palestine Liberation Organization would participate.

But Hurd took issue with the participation of Syria and Libya, the two member states of the Arab League "suspected of sponsoring terrorism."

It was Britain who took the lead to isolate both regimes four years ago, when they were implicated in terrorist attacks in Europe.

The E.C., in fact, im-

posed limited diplomatic sanctions on Syria, such as a ban on ministerial visits to Damascus. But those measures have since been eased.

Most of the E.C. countries agree it is necessary to revive the Euro-Arab political dialogue, which has been stalled for some years.

But some, in addition to Britain, are said to believe the time is not ripe for a high-level meeting, such as is proposed by Mitterrand.

Levy and Moda'i — had to be content with invec-

tive. They referred to the prime minister as the "rotten apple" and his young ministerial supporters — Dan Meridor, Ronni Milo and Ehud Olmert — as "worms with big appetites, who gnaw from the rotten apple."

Sharon, who toured northern Israel recently, insisted that Israel is already negotiating with the PLO, indirectly.

"From the Israeli government to the U.S. secretary of state, from him to the president of Egypt, from the president of Egypt to (Yasir) Arafat, and Arafat returns his replies. That is simply negotiations with the PLO," Sharon said.

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Open Invitation to the Entire Jewish Community

Celebration on Bringing in of a New Sefer Torah into the Synagogue

Sunday, December 17, 1989 10 a.m.

Shaarei Tefilla is very happy to announce that a new Sefer Torah has been donated to the Synagogue by Mr. Saul E. Levi, in memory of his wife Helen ע"ה.

The Sefer Torah will be brought into the synagogue on Sunday December 17, 1989, with the traditional ceremony starting at 10 a.m.

Mr. Levi who is the brother of our treasurer, Ellis Levi, will be present at the festivities, which will be led by Harold Walt.

Carried under a chuppah, the parade will begin at 1909 Cochran preceding to the synagogue.

There will be hakkafot when the Sefer reaches the synagogue, the last section of the Torah will be read, and this will be followed by Divrei Torah.


The celebration will be capped off with a luncheon catered by our Sisterhood.

The entire Jewish Community is cordially invited to attend this historic occasion.

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